

Maryland School Mental Health Alliance Newsletter

Spring Newsletter

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Welcome to the second edition of the Maryland School Mental Health Alliance (MSMHA) newsletter. The newsletter will provide you with the latest information on the implementation of Maryland's School Mental Integration grant. Stay informed by subscribing to the free MSMHA newsletter by emailing dkrizan@mhamd.org if you are interested.

• **Maryland School Mental Health Alliance County Spotlight**

The Harford County Public Schools are one of the four local school systems participating in the Maryland School Mental Health



Integration grant. Through strong inter-agency partnership and coordination, the Harford County Public School system continues to move forward with expanding access and outreach to mental health services for students and their families.

The Crisis Mobile Service, funded by the Harford County Core Service Agency, provides on-site services at all schools upon request. In addition, the School Outreach Advocacy Program (SOAP), located in three elementary schools, offers individual and group counseling and after school programming.

A new mental health pilot project, under the direction of Steven Lentowski, the Director of Student Services, is operating in seven schools: Aberdeen Middle, Edgewood Elementary, Hall's Crossroads Elementary, Havre de Grace Elementary, Magnolia Elementary, Magnolia Middle, and William Paca Elementary. The pilot project has contracted with four mental health providers (Alliance Inc., Key Point, Villa Maria, and Upper Bay), providing these schools with the advantage of having a dedicated mental health provider on site. Each clinician is Master's- level or a licensed LCSW-C/LCPC with a minimum of 2 years post-master's experience. Students are referred for this program by the Student Services Team or by the school counselor.

Links to MSMHA Partners

- [Maryland State Department of Education](#)
- [Center for School Mental Health Analysis and Action](#)
- [Johns Hopkins Center for Prevention and Early Intervention](#)
- [Mental Hygiene Administration](#)
- [Department of Juvenile Services](#)
- [Maryland Assembly on School-Based Health Care](#)
- [Mental Health Association of Maryland](#)
- [Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health](#)
- [The Governor's Office for Children](#)
- [PBIS Maryland](#)

The mental health provider then makes contact with the parent to initiate the process. All mental health treatment requires parental/guardian consent and is voluntary. When the child is referred, a referral goes to the mental health provider and to the Student Services' office.

The Harford County Public Schools participating in the pilot project must collect data on each child. When the child is referred, a referral goes to the mental health provider and to the central office. When the student is picked up for services, the school sends suspension data, attendance information, and the student's grades. The mental health provider administers the BASC 2 and each month the mental health provider sends a list of students that have been served with their DSM IV Axis, and the number of hours billed. At the end of the school year, the BASC 2 will be re-administered and grades, attendance and suspension data will be collected in an effort to quantify the success of the mental health interventions in schools.

By collecting educational outcome data on students who participate in the pilot project, the Harford County Public Schools will be able to show how school mental health services can improve academic achievement and overall school climate. It is hoped that through this outcome data, more schools within the local school system will want to participate in this successful pilot project.

• Moving Forward with the Maryland School Mental Health Integration Grant

Links to National MSMHA Partners

- [IDEA Partnership](#)
- [Center for School-Based Mental Health Programs](#)
- [Center for the Advancement of Mental Health Practices in Schools](#)

The Maryland School Mental Health Alliance (MSMHA) has been working with Anne Arundel, Harford, St. Mary's and Washington Counties to implement the school mental health integration grant. Members of the MSMHA management team have met with local school system representatives and are now in the process of developing mental health resources and trainings that are tailored to each local school system's needs. Each county school system has an active PBIS program, and the MSMHA is currently working with these existing PBIS teams to better integrate mental health services for 'red and yellow zone' students who need early intervention or treatment.

The local school systems have formed their mental health integration teams and have identified three schools in each county that could benefit from more intensive mental health consultation. The teams have

been meeting monthly and are working closely with the MSMHA, which will use a train-the-trainer model. Instruction for these integration teams will focus on effective mental health work with 'red and yellow zone' students, helping teachers and school staff to improve the classroom and school climate. Such guidance complements the MSMHA's recently completed statewide training for PBIS coaches, which has elicited interest from participating local school systems on what future preparation would be useful for their jurisdictions. In the spring the MSMHA will conduct further training in each of the local school systems.

In addition, the MSMHA is in the process of developing resource guides for mental health, crisis and social service resources available in each county and across the state. The guides will be available to all school personnel in each of the local school systems. Resource fact sheets focusing on 36 different mental health related topics are also being developed for local school systems and will also be available on the MSMHA website.

• Annapolis Update on School Mental Health

The Maryland General Assembly 2006 Legislative Session will be coming to an end on April 10th, with legislation making its way across both houses up until the last minute of the session. Below are bills of interest that, if passed, will have an impact on the school and the mental health services provided.

HB 348: Education - Youth Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Programs Requires that the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, instead of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), apply for federal funds for youth suicide prevention programs under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act. This could greatly increase the federal dollars coming into our state for suicide prevention services. **Current Status:** HB 348 has passed in the House with amendments and was heard in the Senate on March 29th.

HB 1495: Education – Student Behavioral Intervention and Support Programs – Applicability Requires that an elementary school with a suspension rate exceeding 18 percent of the school's enrollment implement positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) or an alternative behavioral modification program in collaboration with MSDE. The bill also reduces the percentage of suspended student

criteria in consecutive years, requiring implementation of a PBIS or similar program for a suspension rates of 12 percent in 2008-2009 and 10 percent in 2009-2010.

Current Status: The bill was heard in the House Ways and Means Committee on March 22, 2006 and no action has been taken at this point.

SB 146: Education Task Force on School Safety

Establishing a Task Force on School Safety to evaluate a variety of methods and strategies that could be implemented to improve school safety. A final report is due by December, 2007. **Current Status:** The bill passed in the Senate and has moved to the House Ways and Means Committee. The hearing for this bill will be held on April 4, 2006.

Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA) FY 07 Budget

The Mental Hygiene Administration proposed FY 07 Budget was passed. Conference committee members met on March 27th to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of the FY 2007 budget. Sadly, the House and Senate conference committee members agreed to cut the \$7 million surplus funds plus the \$2.5 million that will reduce funds to serve the uninsured. The total cut to the Mental Hygiene Administration budget is \$9.5 million.

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) FY 07 Budget

The Maryland State Department of Education FY 07 Budget has restored the \$700,000 cut to school-based health centers. The budget also includes a \$1.9 million increase in funding for the early childhood mental health consultation project.

• National Update on the Intersection between School Mental Health and PBIS

On February 22, 2006, the IDEA Partnership hosted a meeting in Chicago with national and state education, mental health, and family

stakeholders that focused on strategizing on how to move forward a national community of practice on PBIS and school-based mental health. Representatives from 10 states and 8 national organizations attended this meeting and began to develop an action agenda on ways to bridge the national and state dialogue on the intersection between PBIS and school mental health.

The IDEA Partnership is committed to maintaining the



PBIS and school-based mental health community of practice group focused on bringing administrators, service providers, educators, family members and policymakers across the nation together to share information and support a more connected definition of the relationship between PBIS and school-based mental health.

Many other states in the practice group that have strong PBIS programs are very interested in learning from Maryland's experience with the mental health integration grant's focus on providing intensive training and mental health resources to five local school systems with active PBIS programs.

The PBIS and School-Based Mental Health Practice group has agreed to manage a session at the National School Based Mental Health Conference in September, 2006 that will be dedicated to bringing coherent messages to the field about the natural intersection between PBIS and mental health and schools, and will highlight states' work related to this issue.

- **Focus on Family Partners**



The Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health, in partnership with the St. Mary's County School System, has identified Barbara Granger as the first Family Partner for the grant project. Barbara has recently joined the staff of the Maryland

Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health as an advocate. She brings a wealth of personal experience, both as a family member of a person with mental health needs, and as an educator and private school administrator.

Barbara will be the family representative at the county-wide integration team meetings for St. Mary's County. She has begun networking with families in the county demonstration schools in the grant. By talking with families, she can bring not only her own personal perspective, but also that of families of children in those demonstration schools.

Barbara is a recent transplant to Maryland. Her family relocated to St. Mary's County from Texas three years ago. She says that transitioning issues are difficult for everyone, and she is grateful that the school took into consideration her child's mental health concerns in

making a smooth educational adjustment. She is excited to be a part of helping all school personnel understand the mental health issues of children and how to improve helping them lead more productive lives.

- **Access to Free School Mental Health Resources**

The Maryland School Mental Alliance (MSMHA) has developed free web-based resource guides specifically tailored for families/caregivers, educators and clinicians. The resource guides focus on mental health issues of interest identified by the four counties involved in the Maryland School Mental Health Integration program and the MSMHA advisory board partners.

The main goal of the resource guides is to provide useful mental health information for busy people. The guides all follow a concise two page format, providing state and national links for more detailed information.

All resources are available for free on the MSMHA web site, www.msmha.org. Currently, resources of interest on the website focus on the following issues: ADHD, asperger syndrome, bullying prevention, kinship care, depression in children and adolescents, oppositional defiant children, reporting abuse, and school re- entry. The website will be continually updated with new mental health resource guides.

[Click Here For More Information](#)

- **Mark Your Calendar!**



[PBIS Spring Forum, April 6, 2006 in Timonium](#)

[MASBHC's SBHC Training Day, May 3, 2006 in Columbia](#)

Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA) Children's Mental Health Conference, May 25, 2006 at the Oheb Shalom Temple, Baltimore City

[School Health Interdisciplinary Program, July 31 through August 3, 2006 at the Turf Valley Resort and Conference Center, Ellicott City](#)

[CSMHA 11th Annual Conference on Advancing School-Based Mental Health, September 28-30, 2006 in Baltimore](#)

- **Multi-State Learning Opportunity**

State representatives from the Department of Education school mental health integration grant projects in Missouri, Ohio and Maryland met together to learn about each other's grant projects and to discuss strategies for how to best work together, share resources, and advance school-mental health system integration.

Missouri is using their school mental health integration grant to focus primarily on one rural school district. The selected district will receive increased mental health resources and supports for youths and parents and a targeted anti-stigma campaign. The Missouri project has the potential to serve as a model for integrating mental health services in depressed rural areas.

The school mental health integration grant in Ohio is being used to improve the ability to identify and make appropriate referrals to mental health or social service programs. The grant will also be used to improve coordination and communication between district, county and state initiatives, and to make issues more culturally relevant on the local level. Ohio, like Maryland, was also recently awarded a mental health transformation and state infrastructure grant. This five year grant will support new and expanded planning and development to promote the transformation of the public mental health system and to foster the goals of recovery and resiliency outlined in the New Freedom Commission report.

All three states agreed to continue this multi-state dialogue and sharing of resources and information as their school mental health integration grants move forward with implementation.

- **Maryland Assembly on School-Based Health Care Kellogg Grant**

The Maryland Assembly on School-Based Health Care (MASBHC) was awarded a five year, \$1.2 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to continue serving youth interests by expanding access to comprehensive health care in schools. MASBHC's efforts have contributed to establishing over 60 school-based health care centers in the state, providing resources to more than 50,000 children. Despite these advances, it is

estimated that over one quarter of children in Maryland do not receive sufficient health care services. The MASBHC intends on using the resources provided by the Kellogg grant to make school-based health care more available, ensure such centers are sustainable long-term, and advance this model as an established component of the state's health care system through its advocacy role at the local, state, and national level. For more information on the Maryland Assembly on School-Based Health Care check-out their website at www.masbhc.org.

Deana Krizan, Newsletter
Editor dkrizan@mhamd.org

410-235-1180, ext. 208

- **Access to Free Economic Evaluation Resource**

As schools face increased budgetary pressure, often school administrators and professionals are responsible for demonstrating the economic value of programs or services. To assist those unfamiliar with these analyses, the University of Maryland School of Medicine's Center for School Mental Health Analysis and Action (CSMHA) has published an article entitled "Measurement of Economic Costs in School Programs for Children and Youth." This is a useful resource for introducing the key concepts, methods, and terminology associated with economic evaluations.

[Click Here for More Information](#)